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condensed form the gist of the statutes relating to taxation and the amount of revenue obtained from each source. Without treating the various subjects touched upon exhaustively, all the chief avenues of the public revenues are clearly and thoroughly explained under the various heads of customs, excise, and other inland revenue, and references are given to minor taxes.

Each chapter is divided into three sections; history, rate at present, and yield during a series of years. It brings down to date, in a way, Chisholm's *Public Income and Expenditures* and Pittar's two works on the customs duties. Marginal references are given throughout to the more important acts of parliament upon which the statements in the text are based, and the statistics given are, we are assured, taken from official sources. It will be easy with this book at hand to run down any further facts required.

The treatment is strictly descriptive and "as objective as possible." There is no discussion, no theory, nothing but clear-cut exposition. Even in the historical part has this objective attitude been maintained. In a work of this sort as the author himself points out, there are many doors open to mistakes. But on making comparison of some twenty or more items, selected at random, with the original sources, I failed to detect any errors.

It is a book that the student of public finance will want at his elbow or on his revolving book case, a necessary reference book for all public libraries, large and small, as it gives in small compass the pertinent facts concerning British revenues obtainable otherwise only by a dreary search through many blue books.

C. C. P.

Soziale Gesetzgebung und Statistik. Ein Beitrag zur Frage der Einrichtung eines Eidgenössischen Sozialstatistischen Amtes. Von N. REICHESBERG. Professor der Nationalökonomie und Statistik an der Universität Bern. (Bern: Scheitlin Spring und Cie., 1908. Pp. 138. 3 fr.)

The first third of the book is devoted to a consideration of the meaning of social legislation, and its necessary obligation to accurate and comprehensive statistics. The fundamental notion of the work is that social legislation should include only those measures which take into consideration the interests of society

as a whole. Unfortunately it has come to mean those laws which regard the interests of any particular social class. Thus to each class that legislation is progressive which favors its interests, and that is reactionary which is prejudicial to them. Down to 1870 most of the legislation favored the capitalistic class. Since this date many laws have been passed with the intention of helping the laboring class. At present the term is usually applied to those measures which look to the relief of the most unfortunate members of society. Social legislation should be directed to the assistance of those forms of production which are in a position to turn out the maximum of goods with the minimum of human effort, and to the widest distribution of the rewards of production.

In order to pass wise social laws, comprehensive and accurate statistical knowledge is required, and about half of the book is devoted to a consideration of the present agencies which are engaged in gathering and publishing social statistics in Switzerland. These may be briefly grouped into those collected by the confederation, by the cantons, and by organizations representing certain class interests like commerce, industry, handicrafts, labor and the peasantry. The confederation publishes statistical reports of varied excellence on commerce, railways, emigration, sanitation, insurance and manufacture. The statistics of the cantons are not uniform, and, in fact, only six cities have statistical bureaus. It is interesting to note that in Freiburg the university makes use of the statistical bureau to furnish instruction to the students along this line. The statistics gathered by the class organizations are open to the suspicion of self-interest. Those subjects are likely to be investigated, and those results published, which will advance the claims of each group, and therefore their recommendations do not enjoy the confidence of the public. This last group also labors under the disadvantage that it lacks the authority to compel its questions to be answered.

The conclusion reached in the book is that the confederation should take charge of the gathering of all statistics upon social questions. The data should be tabulated by the central authority, but it should have the power to compel the cantons to gather the necessary material upon some subjects. At the head of this bureau should be a man "who is not only a master of statistical technique, but of comprehensive economic and social knowledge,

a man who has a clear understanding of the important problems of our civilization, and the ability to distinguish the important from the unessential." The discovery of such a paragon might possibly be attended with some difficulty.

In addition to the bureau to carry on the routine work of the investigations should be an advisory council to watch over the work, to suggest subjects for investigations, and at times to order special researches.

The book is of interest to American students in that it gives a frank expression of the strong and weak points of the public and private statistical bureaus of a country which, in organization, has much in common with our own, and offers suggestions for improvement which may prove of value to us. The principal criticism is that it seems to lay too much stress upon the opposing interests of the various social and industrial classes.

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The Numerical Proportion of the Sexes at Birth. By JOHN BENJAMIN NICHOLS. Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, Vol. I, Part 4. (Lancaster, Pa.: The New Era Publishing Company, 1907).

In the preparation of this study the author made use of over 693 millions of living births and 13 millions of stillbirths. These were taken from all the countries in the world which could lay claim to furnishing information of reasonable reliability. Since different methods are employed in reporting stillbirths these are not in all cases comparable. Until statistics of greater accuracy are available this study can serve as authority upon this subject.

With two or three exceptions, there was nothing novel brought to light by the investigation. The conclusions which most claim attention are the following: The greater the proportion of stillbirths to total births the less is the ratio of males to females stillborn; the proportion of males to females stillborn is decidedly lower in the illegitimate than in the corresponding legitimate class. The effect of war, and of city and country life upon the proportion of the sexes can not be determined.

W. B. B.